

VALLEY FREE PRESS

THE LEHIGH VALLEY'S
GAY & LESBIAN OPINION / NEWSPAPER

VOL. 4 NO. 8

SEPTEMBER 2001

WHAT ARE THE TOP GAYEST CITIES IN PA? U.S. CENSUS MAPS GAY FAMILIES HOW DOES YOUR TOWN RATE?

SEE THE LIST ON PAGE 3

NORTHAMPTON COM. COLL. GRANTS DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS

HEALTH INSURANCE

But are they for all employees?
See "What's That About" for
the answer.



ANTI-GAY POLICY REVERSED!

Local activists stop
policy that was put in place
by Allentown City Solicitor.
see article on page 5



LEHIGH VALLEY AIDSWALK OCT. 7

Lehigh Valley AIDSWALK 2001 will be Sunday, October 7. Registration begins at 11:30 am., the event kick off begins at 12:30 pm. and the walk starts at 1:00 pm. The 5K walk will begin at the Bethlehem Rose Garden at Eighth Ave and W. Union Blvd. Pre-walk festivities include live entertainment and presentations by participating agencies. To volunteer, sponsor, form a team, or walk, or to learn how you can help call 620-767-8695 or website <www.lehighvalleyaidswalk.com>.

SPECTER TO ATTEND PA-GALA FUNDRAISER AT WILLIAM WAY

The Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action (PA-GALA) announces that US Senator Arlen Specter will be the featured speaker at the PASS THE HATE CRIMES BILL! FUNDRAISER on Friday, September 14, in the Ballroom of the William Way Community Center, 1315 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, 6:30 pm until 9:30 pm. Senator Specter serves as the lead Republican sponsor of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act in the US Senate. Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres served. Suggested donation: \$25 per person. Proceeds will support PA-GALA's efforts to pass inclusive State Hate Crimes Legislation. Information: PA-GALA Political Director Steve Black, (610)863-4961, <sblack@epix.net>. Volunteers are needed.



READ
ABOUT A
LOCAL MAN'S
VICTORY OVER
EMPLOYMENT
DISCRIMINATION
ARTICLE - PAGE 7

LATINO GLBT GROUP FORMS IN LV

This new organization is called North East PA-Hispanic Gay & Lesbian Alliance. Several group events have already taken place, including a festive picnic at Heyer's Mill Inn, with over 50 people attending.

Two up-coming "Latin Night" events are planned, (Sept. 2 at Diamondz and Sept. 28 at Stonewall), with entertainment and refreshments. Cover at each event is \$5.

To find out more about NEPA-HGLA or to join, email NEPAHGLA@CS.COM



Valley Free Press does not discriminate on the bases listed in the anti-discrimination statement on page 8, and asks that organizations which request VFP to publish information about their events maintain a similar policy.

FACT SUMMER GAMES

September 9, Rainbow Mt. Resort, 12:30 to 6:00 pm. \$15 in advance or \$20 at gate. Food, team competition, vendor tables, entertainment, Gay Men's Chorus, bagpipers, raffles, and Names Project quilt panels. Hosts / MCs: Tinsel Garland, Robbie Staur and Brian Marks. Volunteers and more teams needed. For info: 610-437-6433.





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RAGS TO RICHES TAKE THE FIRST STEP

by Denise McKelvey

Guilt and Parenting......go together like the shore and sand in your underwear...it's inescapable.

Parents are capable of summoning up a good guilt session for any number of reasons. They may feel like they're ruining their children by spoiling them, letting them watch too much TV, not spending enough time with them, not giving them enough self-esteem, giving them too much self-esteem, etc, etc, etc. You get the idea.

However much we do for our children, it seems there is always something we could have done differently, or should have done better. And lesbian and gay parents have a little something extra to worry about. We wonder if we're setting our children up for trauma either now or in the future because of our homosexuality. Those of us who were previously married, wonder if we should have given up the perfect family picture for one a little to the left of center.

Were we selfish for leaving that ideal behind and possibly damaging our children's fragile psyche? Would they be better off if we'd gritted our teeth and stuck it out?

Those of you who had children non-traditionally, might occasionally wonder if you are doing your children a disservice by not providing them with the Olan Mills version of family. That "ideal family model" is pervasive in the media, in school curriculum, our government, and often in our neighborhoods. As our kids pass through each developmental stage, we continually watch them for signs of maladjustment that we can attribute to our own perceived selfishness.

I have a friend who is in agony right now doing just that. She is a wonderful mother and she has great kids, but one of them is going through a rough time and, subsequently, the guilt has set in. But my friend is coming from a place of honesty and integrity now. Her life is based on truth and love rather than lies and self-denial. She is a far better parent now than before she came out, because she has discovered the joy of knowing herself. What a great role model she is and will continue to be for her children.

Instead of succumbing to the guilt, we need to look to the courage it took us to be true to ourselves for strength. And whatever "family" looks like, the most important things in it are truth and love.

19TH ST MOVIES

Divided We Fall: Sept. 4-9, The Princess and the Warrior: Sept. 8-15. Movie schedule subject to change. Call (610) 432-0888 for information, or go to <www.civictheatre.com>.

ADVERTISING INSERTS IN VFP

The cost of printing the VFP has gone up again, so we have decided to try to offset some of the cost by including one ad insert (max) in each issue. Sometimes all the papers will have them, sometimes, if it is a discount coupon, only the subscription papers will have them. We will not put ads in the body of the paper because they get in the way of the articles. But we will include the name of the company as an underwriter.

This month's underwriter is The Closet Factory (interesting name). They actually sought us out and asked if we would include their flyer if they paid us. The Closet Factory designs, manufactures and installs custom organization systems. They sent us this statement: "The local Closet Factory in Fleetwood, PA is pleased to underwrite this issue of the Valley Free Press." When you call them at 1-800-560-3633, say you saw their ad in VFP and installation will be free.

Dear Denise, Now that the stock market seems to be down, is it a good time to buy or a bad time? Should I wait until the economy is stronger before I invest? **Signed, Emotional Wreck**

Dear Emotional, Many investors turn off completely at the mere mention of the concept of long-term investing. We are a product of a society that demands immediate gratification. But picture the last car on a train. It is always being whipped from side to side. You are the caboose if you are constantly waiting for a trend to confirm itself and then hopping on, late in the game. On the other hand, some people avoid investing fearing that whatever decision they made today, might turn out to be the wrong one tomorrow.

How To Invest, Emotion Free? There are easy, rational solutions to rule your investment activity if you feel you can't decide when is the exact time to invest.

As I have said many times before, the first thing is to figure out your investment goals and make a plan. Write this all down and refer to it frequently. Then take these three statements into consideration when you are considering your investment timing.

First: Rather than trying to pinpoint when the perfect time to invest is, simply invest at regular intervals. Choose an amount, and a weekly, monthly or quarterly timeframe. Make your investments like clockwork, at those appointed times. This will take advantage of the principal of dollar cost averaging as a hedge against price swings.

Second: "Buy Value In Any Market." A value investment is considered underpriced for today's market. Buying a Value Stock is the surest way to avoid following the crowds and finding yourself too late to the ball.

Third: Take profits. Set a profit goal and a loss goal in advance. Stick to your goal, without looking back.

I hope this gives you as better idea as to WHEN to invest. Finding the right investments is another column.

This is information is one person's opinion and may not fit your financial situation.

MC MARRIAGE POLL

The Morning Call had a huge article on the front page about same-sex domestic partners that have now been counted by the US census. The census found that there are same-sex couples in 99.34% of the municipalities across the US. No politician will ever be able to say again that "there are no gay people in my constituency." No school principal will ever be able to say again that "there are no gay families in our school system." These census figures may turn out to mean more to us than we could ever have imagined.

To ride on the sensationalism that the Call thought the article would generate, they had this on line poll on their website: Should Pennsylvania law permit same-sex marriage? The poll showed the yeses ahead from the beginning, and after running for several days ended up with these nifty figures.

YES	53.5%	485 responses
NO	44.5%	403 responses
Unsure	2.0%	18 responses

We all thought there would be a bunch of back-lash responses in the letters section, there must have been some, but so far, none have been published. 541 DP same-sex couples were counted by the census in Lehigh County, 410 in Northampton. In the Morning Call circulation area, over 4400 same-sex couples were counted by the census. We really are everywhere, we always knew it, but now everyone else does too.

HIV TESTING

For free HIV counseling and testing: Allentown Health Bureau, 245 North 6th St. Allentown. 610-437-7742, FAX 610-437-8799

GLOSS TENNIS

GLOSS (The Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society) tennis is now at the Muhlenberg College courts, between 24th and Chew Sts. in Allentown on Sundays at 5 pm. For more info about tennis or other GLOSS sports and events contact: <fabio@early.com>.

PRIDE NATIONAL COMING OUT EVENTS

"A Weekend OUT in the VALLEY" will include a one-night Film Festival on Thursday, Oct. 11, a Youth Dance (and possibly a separate OLDIES Dance) on Friday, Oct. 12, and a Comedy Night "Laughing Out Loud," featuring nationally known openly gay comedian David Smith, on Saturday, Oct. 13. For information contact Pride at 610-770-6200 or <pridelv@hotmail.com>.

PRIDE ELECTIONS

The October Election Meeting will be held at 7 pm on Wed., October 17 at UUCLV at 424 Center St., Bethlehem. To run for a board position, please contact Pride voicemail at 610-770-6200 or at <pridelv@hotmail.com>. To be able to vote at a Pride Election you must be a Pride

GAY MEN OF LV

September 8: Film "Boy's Life 3"
September 29: Game Night

Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley is a social group that meets every 2nd and 4th Saturday at 7 pm at UUCLV, 424 Center St. Bethlehem. For information email <gaymenlv@hotmail.com>.

MCCLV EVENTS

MCCLV Board of Directors, Monday September 10 at 7 pm.... September 20 The Liberty High School Gay/Straight Alliance kick-off meeting at MCCLV....
UPCOMING:

Volunteer or Minister Workshop, Thursday, September 13, 6:00-9:30 p.m.
Fellowship Hall....Sock-Hop Dance, Saturday, September 29, 7 p.m. to 10:30 p.m....
MCCLV's Anniversary Service - Sunday, October 21. MCC New York Pastor Rev. Pat Bumgardner guest preacher....OCTOBER 20, 2001, at 6 p.m., the Lehigh Valley is invited to attend MCCLV's Anniversary and Awards Ceremony Banquet and Dance at the Hotel Bethlehem. Tickets are \$25.00. Phone (610)954-7775 for reservations.

GLORA EVENTS

GLORA, the Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown, has scheduled these upcoming events:
-September 2 - Potluck/picnic at Nockamixon State Park.-September 22 - Night out at the Nostalgia Bar in Reading.
-September 30 - Potluck/picnic at Green Lane in Pennsburg.-October 6 - Potluck in Allentown. Oct 27: Halloween Party Nov. 3: Hayride.-Dec. 2 - GLORA'S 12th Anniversary Dinner at Bower's Hotel
For additional information about these and other GLORA events, write GLORA at P.O. Box 1952, Allentown, PA, 18105-1952, or e-mail <GLORAinPA@aol.com>.

LV GAY MEN'S CHORUS

The Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus season will center on the performance of "Sing for the Cure," which benefits the Komen Breast Cancer Foundation. The Chorus will perform this piece locally on November 17 and also in New Haven, Ct. The LVGMC will also be singing at the FACT Games, Sept. 9 at Rainbow Mt. Information: <LVGMC.org> or (610) 366-3320.

BREAST CANCER STORIES

LV Gay Men's Chorus member Steve Olofson is soliciting stories of persons who have dealt with breast cancer, for publication in the program of the performance of "Sing for the Cure." Please consider sharing your story or perhaps just some thoughts, with others. To include as many stories as possible, please keep your's under 175 words. Allow Steve time to reserve a space for your story by emailing him asap at <steven.olofson@verizon.net>.

OLDIES DANCE

On September 29, The Outlaws (nee Miz's) Women's Softball team is having its 3rd annual dance fund raiser, 6:30 pm to 11pm, at the Hanover Fire Company off Rt. 512. Dance in a smoke-free environment to hits from the 70's, 80's, and 90's. Appetizers, dinner, and dessert will be provided. BYO beverages. Tickets purchased by September 22 are \$15.00 per person and \$25.00 per couple. \$15.00 at the door. R.S.V.P. by September 22 to Sherri 610-837-0757 or Wendy 610-262-2519. Song requests accepted by R.S.V.P. date.

PFLAG MEETING

"Parents, Family & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) will meet on Sunday, September 9, 3 to 5 PM at Northampton Com. Coll. in College Center Room 134. Beth Peters from the Crime Victims Council LV will be the guest speaker. PFLAG: (610) 967-5219

TOP GAYEST TOWNS IN PA

The 2000 census has produced some wonderful information. For the first time, same-sex couples could indicate if they were domestic partners. . Over 21,000 PA same-sex couples (600,000 in the US) declared their relationship on the census. Every PA county had representation. How did your town rank? Below are the 30 "gayest" places in Pennsylvania, based on the actual number of couples who reported (in descending order).

Philadelphia City, Philadelphia County
Pittsburgh City, Allegheny County
Allentown City, Lehigh County
Harrisburg City, Dauphin County
Reading City, Berks County
Erie City, Erie County
Lancaster City, Lancaster County
Upper Darby Township, Delaware County
Scranton City, Lackawanna County
Bensalem Township, Bucks County
Abington Township, Montgomery County
Solebury Township, Bucks County
Lower Merion Township, Montgomery Co.
York City, York County
Bethlehem City, Northampton County
Penn Hills Township, Allegheny County
Wilkinsburg Borough, Allegheny County
Cheltenham Township, Montgomery Co.
Bristol Township, Bucks County
Chester City, Delaware County
Norristown Borough, Montgomery County
Haverford Township, Delaware County
Wilkes-Barre City, Luzerne County
Lower Paxton Township, Dauphin county
Easton City, Northampton County
Springfield Township, Montgomery County
Millcreek Township, Erie County
Altoona City, Blair County
Data compiled by Scott Safier of
PA Freedom to Marry Coalition

WESTENHOEFER AT KUTZTOWN

Suzanne Westenhoefer will perform at Kutztown University on October 17, 2001 at 7:30 pm. Proceeds will benefit the newly established GLBT scholarship fund. Tickets: \$20.00 (free to students w/ ID). Generous contributions to the scholarship fund will include priority seating and admission to a reception with Suzanne Westenhoefer at The Bowers Hotel. Info: <bell@kutztown.edu>.

LV BEARS

The Lehigh Valley Bears is a social group for hairy men and their admirers. The group meets the first Saturday of the Month in the Moose Lounge at the Stonewall in Allentown. For info on upcoming events contact Mike at 610-814-6916 or at mtmbear@fast.net

CALENDAR ⁴

ACCO-A Chorus Celebrating Women, Rehearsals, Thursdays 7-10pm at UUCLV Bethlehem, 610.767.7897
AIDS Outreach-112 N. 5th St. Allentown, PA 610.435.8424
AIDSWALK- AIDSWALK Lehigh Valley - 610.974.8701 www.regiononline.com/ivads
ASC-AIDS Service Center 610.974.8701
As If Productions - Documentary Film Makers, 610.434.7845
BMA- Bucks/Montgomery Alliance for Gay and Lesbian Concerns 215-529-0360
B&N- Barnes and Noble Gay & Lesbian Book Club. White Hall store, Monthly, 7:00pm.

CIVIC and 19th St. Theater, 527 N 19th St, 610-432-8943, <civictheater.com>
Enigma Players 610-432-0706
EQUAL at Agere 610.712.5532
FACT- Fighting AIDS Continuously Together 610.820.5519

GLEE at Air Products
GLASS-at Lehigh Univ., 610.758.3469
GLISN- at Dun & Bradstreet, <vagrantlyhollow.com/GLISN/>
GLORA- Gay and Lesbian Organization of Reading and Allentown (Social gatherings, various dates) Newsletter- The Tassle. Write to: P.O. Box 1952, Allentown PA 18105-1952, email: GLORAINPA@AOL.COM
GLOSS - Gay and Lesbian Organized Sports Society, P.O. Box 21862 Lehigh Valley, PA 18002 Volleyball, Tennis, Racquet Ball 610.434.2966.

GMLV- Gay Men of the Lehigh Valley, 2nd and 4th Saturday Monthly 7pm UUCLV, Bethlehem, 610.954.7775
HMFF-Hope Ministry Family Fellowship, Sundays, 11 am, Open Space Gallery, 931 Hamilton St. 610-791-0716
Integrity- Lesbian and Gay Episcopalians Family and Friends 1st Monday each month 7pm Trinity Episcopal Church 2nd Floor Chapel, 44 E. Market Street Bethlehem. 610-758-8642
KS-Kindred Spirits- Support, discussion, and social group for lesbians and bisexual women Fridays at 6:30pm, Contact: Chris at 610-868-0248, or Donna at 610.997.00607
LVGMC -Lehigh Valley Gay Men's Chorus, Rehearsals Tuesdays, UUCLV Bethlehem. 610.366.3320, lvgmc@hotmail.com
MCC - Metropolitan Community Church, office-424 Center St. (UUCLV), Bethlehem, 6 pm Sundays, 610.954.7775
NCC- Northampton Community College Gay Lesbian and Bisexual Student Union, Meetings every Monday from 4pm to 6pm at CC114 (Cohen Lounge), College Center call 610.861.5541 (#1386) or 882-2531

19th St Civic Theatre- 610.432.8943
Out There- Students at Cedar Crest College
PA-GALA - PA Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Political Action, (Voter's Info Booklet, & Political Lobbying) For membership: send \$20 to: P.O. Box 20825 Lehigh Valley 18002 610.432.5449
PFLAG - LV Parents Families and Friends of Lesbians and gays 2nd Sundays 3pm at NCC, Coll. Cntr Rm 134 610.967.5219 <www.users.fast.net/~pflag>
Pride - Pride of the Lehigh Valley, (Pride Festival) 610.770.6200, email: <lvpride@hotmail.com>, <www.prideoflv.org>
QuEST - Student group at Lafayette College Farion Center Box 429 Easton, PA, <QuEST_Lafayette@hotmail.com>

SEPTEMBER 2001

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 WDIY GLOSS BEARS
2 GLORA MCC AS IF WDIY NCFM UUCLV	3 INTEGRITY RAA Labor Day	4 GLOSS LVGMC	5	6 ACCO RAA Rehearsals GLOSS Bowling	7 KS	8 GMLV WDIY GLOSS
9 PFLAG FACT SUMMER GAMES	10 RAA	11 GLOSS LVGMC GLSEN	12	13 Reading RAA PFLAG GLOSS ACCO Bowling	14 KS PA-GALA FUND RAISER	15 WDIY GLOSS
16 MCC WDIY NCFM UUCLV	17 RAA ROSE HASHANAH	18 GLOSS LVGMC	19	20 Bowling Liberty RAA GLOSS ACCO	21 KS	22 GMLV WDIY GLOSS
23 30 MCC GLORA WDIY NCFM UUCLV	24 RAA	25 GLOSS LVGMC	26	27 ACCO RAA GLOSS Bowling	28	29 HG LA SOCK HOP DANCE

OCTOBER 2001

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 MCC WDIY NCFM UUCLV	2 INTEGRITY RAA	3 GLOSS LVGMC	4	5 RAA Bowling GLOSS ACCO	6 KS	7 GLORA WDIY GLOSS BEARS
8 AIDSWALK	9 RAA	10 GLOSS LVGMC	11	12 PRIDE NATIONAL COMING OUT DAY	13 KS	14 GMLV WDIY GLOSS PRIDE
15 PFLAG MCC WDIY NCFM UUCLV	16 RAA	17 GLOSS LVGMC	18 WESTENHOEFER PRIDE ELECTIONS	19 RAA Bowling GLOSS ACCO	20 KS	21 MCC WDIY BANQUET
22 MCC WDIY NCFM UUCLV	23 RAA	24 GLOSS LVGMC	25	26 RAA Bowling GLOSS ACCO	27 KS	28 GMLV WDIY TRAINING GLOSS
29 MCC WDIY NCFM UUCLV	30 RAA	31 GLOSS LVGMC				

NOVEMBER 2001

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 ACCO RAA GLOSS	2 KS	3 WDIY GLOSS BEARS
4 MCC NCFM UUCLV	5 INTEGRITY RAA	6 GLOSS LVGMC	7	8 ACCO RAA GLOSS	9 KS	10 GMLV WDIY GLOSS
11 FACT MCC NCFM UUCLV	12 RAA	13 GLOSS LVGMC	14	15 ACCO RAA GLOSS	16 KS	17 LVGMC CONCERT
18 MCC NCFM UUCLV	19 RAA	20 GLOSS LVGMC	21 PRIDE	22 ACCO RAA GLOSS	23 KS	24 GMLV WDIY GLOSS
25 MCC NCFM UUCLV	26 RAA	27 GLOSS LVGMC	28	29 ACCO RAA GLOSS	30 KS	

Quakers-Lehigh Valley Friends Meeting-
Route 512 1/2 mi. North of Rte 22 Bethlehem,
PA. Worship at 9:30 am. (610)691-3411.
RAA- Rainbow AA meetings, Mon. & Thurs.
Episcopal Church, 16th & Turner Atown.
Ren- Renaissance Transgendered Assoc.,
PO Box 3624 Atown, PA 18016
610- 821- 2955 renlv@ren.org
Rainbow Space - Muhlenberg College
Organization 610.821.3244
Reading P-FLAG 610.488.7533or 670.8029
Safe Space- At Lehigh U. 610.758.3469
Saint John's Lutheran Church- A welcoming,
gay affirming church, 32 S. 5th st. Allentown
610.435.1587
Softball-(Women's) call Diamondz,
610.865.1028
T.O. - Theatre Outlet-29Nth 9th St, Allentown,
610-820-9270.
TST- Touchstone Theatre, 321 E. 4th St. Beth.
610-867-1689, touchstone@nni.com
Unity- 26 N. 3rd St. Emmaus, 767-4417
UUCLV- Unitarian Universalist Church of the
Lehigh Valley, 424 Center Street, Bethlehem,
18018 610.866.7652.
VFP- Valley Free Press 610.432.5449
VYH - Valley Youth House weekly group for
emotionally troubled GLBT youth 610.432.6481
WDIY - 88.1 fm 93.9 fm Saturday 7:30 pm
Assorted Women, Sunday 6:30pm- This Way
Out 610.694.8100

SPECIAL UPCOMING EVENTS:

BINGO AT DIAMONZ - SUNDAYS
RAINBOW BOWLING - THURSDAYS
KINDRED SPIRITS - FRIDAYS
LV BEARS -
FIRST SATURDAY EACH MONTH
GAY MEN OF LV -
2ND AND 4TH SATURDAYS
GLOSS VOLLEYBALL -
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS
GLOSS TENNIS - SUNDAYS
GLOSS RACQUETBALL -
TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS
DIAMONZ SOFTBALL - TUES & THURS

FACT SUMMER GAMES - SEPT 9
PFLAG - LV SEPT 9
GLSEN MEETING - SEPT 11
PA-GALA FUNDRAISER - SEPT 14
LIBERTY GSA KICK-OFF - SEPT 20
A SKULL IN CONNEMARA AT
THEATRE OUTLET - SEPT 20 - OCT 7
NEPA-HGLA LATIN NIGHT - SEPT 28
PRIDE GOLF TOURNAMENT - SEPT 29
MCC SOCK-HOP SEPT 29
OUTLAWS DANCE SEPT 29
GLORA POTLUCK - SEPT 30
GLORA POTLUCK - OCT 6
AIDS WALK - OCT 7
PRIDE FILM FEST - OCT 11
PRIDE YOUTH DANCE - OCT 12
PRIDE COMEDY NIGHT - OCT 13
PRIDE ELECTIONS - OCT 17
K-TOWN SCHOLARSHIP BENEFIT
SUZANNE WESTENHOEFER - OCT 17
MCCIV BANQUET OCT 20
MCC ANNIVERSARY SERVICE OCT 21
YOUTH GRP TRAINING - OCT 27
FACT @ STATE THEATER - NOV 11
LVGMC CONCERT - NOV 17
FACT SNOWBALL - DEC 2
GLORA ANNUAL DINNER - DEC 2

THE INFORMATION IN
THIS CALENDAR IS SUBJECT
TO CHANGE.
CALL TO CONFIRM
CALL TO POST INFO:
610-432-5449
EMAIL:
LIZTRISH@AOL.COM

DISCRIMINATION THWARTED

CITY SOLICITOR'S ACTIONS DISCOVERED ... REVERSED

A recent Morning Call article exposed the efforts of Allentown City Solicitor Robert Daday to change the City's hiring policy to omit sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation and union membership from the anti-discrimination section of the personnel code. It was Allyson Hamm, through her work with the Allentown Human Relations Commission (AHRC), who originally caught the omission and alerted PA-GALA Co-chair Liz Bradbury. PA-GALA, the AHRC and others immediately began separate investigations and a successful effort to get the Mayor's office and Solicitor Daday to reverse his actions.

Below are parts of the letter Mr. Daday submitted to the Morning Call in response to the article, and a letter from Liz Bradbury, that the MC printed in response to Daday. Note that Daday's use of a "Reading court case" is negated by information in Bradbury's letter.

To the Editor: I would like to clarify my position regarding the City of Allentown's discrimination policy, ...In my legal opinion, the City of Allentown cannot extend protections under its Human Relations Ordinance to protect groups not included in the state enabling statute...that opinion is based upon a court decision which prevented the City of Reading from extending the protections of its Human Relations Ordinance to groups not listed in the state statute. A Human Relations Ordinance binds all persons and entities within a municipality and includes penal provisions and, therefore, is strictly construed. I believe this opinion has created confusion, as it relates to my opinion regarding the city's own employment policies.

...Because various federal laws provide discrimination protection to employees different from that provided by the Home Rule Charter, it was, and is, my belief that these protections under federal law needed to be reflected in a regulation. To include the groups described in the Home Rule Charter would exceed the legal protection authorized under the Home Rule Charter. I have described this legal quandary at length in a memorandum to Councilperson Pamela Varkony.

Unfortunately, my legal opinions on these two issues have created an assumption that I am advising the Mayor to ignore the Home Rule Charter provision regarding discrimination. As I explained to Councilperson Varkony, to avoid that mis-perception, although I believe it to be redundant, I am redrafting the discrimination AIM regulation to reflect only the groups and protections described in the City's Home Rule Charter.

The article that appeared in The Morning Call on July 23 implies that I have advocated "job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, military background, political views or union activity." (VFP Editor's note- these were the only groups Mr. Daday cut from the policy) This presumption is patently false and not based in fact. To the contrary, as the City Solicitor, it is my responsibility to advise City Council, the Mayor and the City Controller as to the appropriate legal basis for actions taken or sought to be taken by them. My personal opinion concerning this - or any issue - is and has always been irrelevant. Robert P. Daday, City Solicitor, Allentown

To the Editor: I was glad to see the exposure of Allentown City Solicitor Robert Daday's attempt to omit protections based on political affiliation, union membership, sexual orientation and veteran status from the Allentown City employees hiring policy (7/23/01). Thank goodness City Council members Pamela Varkony and Martin Velazquez and the Allentown Human Relations Commission discovered Mr. Daday's attempt to ignore the City Charter.

In his letter of 8/2/01, Mr. Daday attempts to clarify his position. He cites a Reading court case he says supports his opinion. He neglects to mention that the appeal's court decision in that case (Riedel v. Human Relations Commission of the City of Reading, 2000 WL 973184 'PA Cwith' July 17, 2000) was reversed by the PA State Supreme Court, finding that the City of Reading could enforce its code. This reversal nullifies the case's validity as a precedent for Mr. Daday's argument regarding the Allentown Human Relations Ordinance.

State Anti-discrimination Law serves as the minimum protection to which employers must adhere, not the maximum. Adding additional protections helps to attract and retain high quality employees. That's why these protections are in the Charter and why major companies like Dun & Bradstreet and Air Products have hiring and personnel policies that go beyond legal minimums. Even the State itself has a personnel policy which extends protections, including sexual orientation, beyond state law requirements.

Let's hope our new Mayor has the leadership capabilities to choose a City Solicitor who can provide all city government with accurate legal information untainted by a personal agenda. The new administration must not retain anyone who functions in the "stealth" fashion so characteristic of the current administration.

Elizabeth Bradbury Co-Chair: PA-GALA

What's That About?



Readers write or email
"What's That About?"
editors with questions
about gay and lesbian issues.



Dear WTA: Both the Morning Call and the PGN have reported that Northampton Community College is going to give benefits to Domestic Partners (both same-sex and opposite-sex) of employees. But I have also heard these benefits are only for administrators, and that the faculty and staff are not included. Who really gets them? Signed Faculty Partner

Dear FP: We called the administration at NCC and asked them who gets the benefits. You are right, at this time, only administrators are set to get the benefits because the contract negotiations for the three "unions" representing, faculty, clerical staff and the service organization must negotiate their benefits separately.

We asked administrator Heidi Butler what would happen if these other organizations did not work to get the DP Benefits for their members? Couldn't the administration just give them the benefits, since it would be the right and moral thing to do? She said she would check. In a later message she told me benefits had to be negotiated by the separate groups, which didn't really answer my question.

We called faculty negotiating team member Dan Bayak to see if he could tell us what the plans were to seek equal benefits for the faculty, but as of press time we have not heard back. We'll continue to cover this very important issue in up coming VFPs because since NCC receives state and county funding, their support of same-sex families through the granting of benefits is very significant.

Dear WTA: What was the purpose of the Rainbow Fest? Who actually organized it? Was it a not-for-profit group? Signed Confused

Dear Con: Several people sent in this question because there was little information to really make that clear. Valley Free Press didn't get a press release about Rainbow Fest for publication at all. But it may have been because this was a fun idea that sprang up at the last minute.

Here is what we were able to find out. The first Morning Call blurb said the event was put on by PlanetGay. The second Morning Call article that came out after the event, said the event was organized by Gary Berger. The number to call for information was the number for Diamonz. We contacted Lenora at Diamonz and she told us that she herself was involved, "along with Gary, John & Terry. It was put together just as a fun festival with the help of Phil City Entertainment and Charlie Brown, Head of the Parks Dept in Bethlehem."

An email we got just before the event said the purpose was to encourage tolerance and diversity in the community. The Call article quoted Gary saying the event was to showcase gay talent and local gay business, which it seemed to do.

The group that put on the event, is not a registered not-for-profit. Most of the groups that were mentioned as organizers are for-profit enterprises. I don't think a lot of money was made by anyone, whether it was the vendors or the promoters. But this was the first GLBT event to be scheduled like a festival in Bethlehem so you have to give points for trying.

FACT EVENTS SCHEDULE

Mandy Patinkin Concert, (FACT and PALS fund raiser) Saturday, Nov. 11, State Theater in Easton. Choice seating @ \$75.00 includes reception with artists. Snow Ball - Sunday December 2 at the Hilton. Contact FACT at 610-820-5519.

6

SCOTT SAYS BY SCOTT LAUBNER

TOO TWO - DIMENSIONAL

Hello VFP readers. My name is Scott and this is my second column. I'm sure all of you are familiar with the Emmy award winning show "Will & Grace." I enjoy it immensely because of the excellent writing and acting on the show. If I had a nickel for every time Jack and Karen made me laugh I could retire or at least hire a houseboy. And Will Truman and I are kindred spirits. What do I have in common with Will Truman you may ask? Well, I'm not a lawyer and I don't live in New York, but we are both in desperate need of husbands. I know my high standards are holding me back, but I don't understand about Will. He is an attractive, gay attorney in Manhattan. There is no reason why he should not have a boyfriend by the fourth season of this show. In fact, it insults my intelligence that he doesn't have a significant other.

NBC should learn from Showtime's "Queer as Folk," which is one of the most highly watched and critically acclaimed cable shows. Showtime has shown a lot of courage by addressing topics that are relevant and cutting edge. The characters on Queer as Folk are fully developed because they have relationships. Will has promise, but he is still just two-dimensional. This could change if Will was given a boyfriend and allowed to explore his sexuality on network TV. I know one channel is cable and one is network but I think we have progressed far enough that Will can get some action.

And so my little chipmunk readers, let's hope NBC will see the light that gay men don't have to be celibate.

GLBT YOUTH GROUP TRAINING

Volunteer training for the new GLBT youth group will be on Oct. 27 at UUCLV in Bethlehem. Volunteers must be at least 25 years old and go through a background check for criminal and child abuse before the training. For applications and background check forms contact Ilse Stoll, 610-868-2153. The GLBT youth group is non religious and will be run under the UUCLV Welcoming Congregation Committee it is for young people ages 14-20.

GAY, LESBIAN, STRAIGHT EDUCATION NETWORK

A GLSEN (Gay Lesbian Straight Educations Network) chapter is starting in the Lehigh Valley. Those interested should attend an organizational meeting on September 11, at 7 pm. Call Carol Barron, 610-867-6641 or email <csbarron21@aol.com> for directions. GLSEN is the largest national organization working to end anti-gay bias in schools.

ECUMENICAL WORKSHOP

The Ecumenical Continuing Education Task Force (ECETF) on Homosexuality and the Church, is sponsoring a series of events to help congregations let gays and lesbians know they are welcome and valued. They will be held in a three-evening series, conducted in each of three locations (the Lehigh Valley, Hazleton and Reading) in September and October. The series is titled "One Vine, Many Branches: Enfolded Gays and Lesbians into the Life of the Congregation." The ECETFH is made up of clergy and laity from the Episcopal Church, Lutheran Church, Metropolitan Community Church, Moravian Church, United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church. For information: call Jim Palmquist: 610-398-6818.

1ST ANNUAL PRIDE GOLF TOURNEY

The Pride LV Golf Tournament will be Saturday, Sept. 29 at Shepard Hills Golf Course at 1:00 pm. Picnic and prizes. Fee: \$50.00 per golfer, \$20.00 per attendee (non-golfer). Reservations by September 10. Send check to: Pride of the Lehigh Valley, c/o J. Wurster, 332 N. Albright Ave., Allentown, PA 18104. For info: Donna: 610-997-0607 or Denise: 610-216-0980.

MCC SOCK-HOP: SEPT 29

MCCLV is hosting a fun and fabulous Sock-Hop Dance, Saturday, Sept. 29, 7 pm to 10:30 pm. UUCLV gym, DJ'd by Jim Fillman. Tickets: \$10. Fundraiser for the MCCLV Building Fund. 610-954-7775

A VIEW FROM A DYKE

BY LIZ BRADBURY

FIGHTING AND WINNING

John called PA-GALA and VFP because he was experiencing severe anti-gay harassment at work and it was beginning to affect his health.

John is an assistant manager at a national chain store in Allentown. He is 45 and has worked at that store for 8 years. He is very good at his job, and the rest of the store personnel respect him as a good boss. He is out at work; not just, "I think everybody knows," but honestly out as a gay man.

A new store manager began to harass John about being gay. Though John told the manager to stop or he would report him to the Head-Office, the manager just laughed saying no one would believe him.

I believe that the manager was not just harassing John because John is gay, but because he believed (erroneously) that John would not fight back. (The manager is an EBB - see last month's article).

Anti-gay employment discrimination is not illegal in Pennsylvania. BUT... this manager sounded like he had stepped over the line into the area of (general) sexual harassment. Federal laws protect all employees from sexual harassment.

In the Lehigh Valley, it is technically not illegal to call an employee a homo or even a faggot, or to say: We fire gays here... Did you go to P-Town for vacation?... I bet you have rainbow flags all over your car... Gays are stupid.

BUT!!! under Federal Law, sexual harassment (even same-sex) of an employee is illegal. Not just trying to get them to have sex. It also means making sexual remarks in a demeaning way. Like: Did you get a lot of sex at the Pride Festival?... I bet that guy's your type... If you had sex with the right woman (or man) you'd go straight... Someone called, probably wants a date... and certainly if someone touches or grabs another person, even if they insist it was "just a joke," could be illegal under sexual harassment law.

John's manager was sexually harassing him publicly. He even put some of it in writing. Luckily for John, the other workers were concerned for him, so eight of them sent a letter to the Home Office about the harassment.

John carefully kept track of all the incidents of harassment, including time, place, what happened and who was there. We helped him compile this information, and we helped him write a letter to the Home Office (and other agencies) about the harassment. John was able to prove his complaint with witnesses and evidence.

During interviews, the manager tried to say that he didn't know John was gay and that it was all a big joke. Since John was completely out, the other workers supported John's statement that everyone there, even the manager, knew John was gay.

After a few days the manager was "removed" from the store, he was seen looking for a new job the next day. The entire process from the day John called us, took about four weeks. While it seemed like forever to John, it really was a speedy resolution. It went quickly because John was careful with documentation, and most significantly, John had the support of his co-workers.

If there had been an anti-discrimination law regarding employment in Allentown, perhaps none of this would have happened at all.

Note: Names have been changed or not mentioned in this article, because the Corporation itself has asked the employees to not talk directly about this case. All people should have a lawyer to call on if they need to. I (and PA-GALA and VFP) am not a lawyer and cannot give legal advice.

RENDELL AT LV PRIDE

We forgot to mention in the last Valley Free Press that Ed Rendell, former Mayor of Philadelphia and current candidate for Governor, also attended the Lehigh Valley Pride Festival in June as a surprise guest. Rendell, who has been a supporter of the GLBT community since the late 1970s, spoke from the Pride Stage about GLBT issues. The crowds were energized by his appearance.

7

STICKS AND STONES AND HOMONAMES?

BY PATRICIA SULLIVAN

When I opened the Sunday paper to the (nationally syndicated) crossword puzzle and saw the puzzle was titled "Homonames" I couldn't wait to play. Of course, as a crossword enthusiast I knew that "Homonames" was merely a homonym - a word that sounds like another word, is spelled differently, and has a entirely different meaning. But the title struck a familiar chord and I was drawn right in to solve the play on words for the week. I was totally oblivious of the controversy that had already begun to swirl around the editor's choice of title.

The Philadelphia Inquirer, the Cleveland Plain Dealer and the Des Moines Register chose not to publish the puzzle. Their reasons: #1 - not wanting to "out" people whose names sounded like the puzzle answers ("caryfissure", "wrecksread", "jeanshallot", "betmidler", "robinleach", "curtristle", "fillspector", "dockholiday", "kneelsore" and "gymneighbors"); and #2, that it would be a "slur on sexual orientation" which would violate the papers' standards.

The puzzle is about homonyms, which literally means *same-word*. Defining the prefix "homo" as gay in this instance, is as absurd as saying homo sapiens means gay man.

So how is this puzzle a "slur on sexual orientation" or offensive to gay people? There is a good chance that since you are reading this paper, you are in the gay community yourself. Do you feel offended by the puzzle? Even if you objected to the word homonames because you didn't understand what it meant, would your objection be valid? Isn't an objection like that a little like that recent case in England where vigilantes destroyed the office of a children's doctor because they thought the word pediatrician meant pedophile? A newspaper that protected people like that would be ridiculously patronizing.

It certainly isn't objectionable to the gay community that these names might be associated with the gay population. A person who self identifies as gay might be proud to be classed with some of these popular icons. A person who would be offended is obviously anti-gay, because they would be a person for whom being identified as gay or associating oneself with gay culture, would be threatening or offensive. This mix of personalities is so eclectic, one who protests too much (tomcrawes, liberaunchy) is certain to end up the loser in the battle to eclipse themselves from a gay identity.

If patriarchal reactionaries really want to protect us by cutting things from their papers they say are anti-gay or offensive to GLBT people, they need to review their right wing editorials and religious columnists who regularly use the media to spew hate language at us in the name of God and County. Rather than refuse to print words that no gay person would read as "anti-gay slurs," like homonym - homonames, they should consider a campaign to protect our GLBT youth from the many real anti-gay slurs children hear daily at school.

In many ways, what frightens bigots the most is when mainstream media begins to treat us just like everyone else. Those who seek to marginalize us in the guise of "protection" do us no service.

THEATRE OUTLET

Theatre Outlet at 29 North 9th Street Allentown announces its MAINSTAGE SEASON 2001-2002

A SKULL IN CONNEMARA by Martin McDonagh: Sept 20 - Oct 7

Jean Shepherd's A CHRISTMAS STORY: Dec 6 - Dec 23

THE LARAMIE PROJECT by Moises Kaufman: Mar 7 - Mar 24

THE CRADLE WILL ROCK by Marc Blitzstein: May 30 - Jun 23

Call TO for show times and tickets.

CLASSES: Master Class in Acting returns for a 10 week Fall Term from October 1 - December 3, 2001. Class is held on Mondays from 6:30pm - 9:30pm. Tuition for returning students is \$260, and \$275 for new students. Information: 610-820-9270, theatreo@aol.com, www.theatreoutlet.org

POP QUIZ

1. Who said of her father's concerns with her dating actors, "He needn't have worried, most of my dates were on the gay side."
A. Ester Williams B. Debbie Reynolds
C. Cyd Charisse D. Ann Miller

2. What NYPD Blue character is played by an openly gay actor?

3. What airline joined PlanetOut to create an online system directed at gay and lesbian travel?
A. Delta B. United C. Continental D. U.S. Airways

4. On September 2, the cartoon network will air a cartoon same-sex custody trial between "dads" Benton and Race over what cartoon kid?
A. Hadji B. Robin C. Johnny D. Speed

5. Evan Wolfson, lawyer for the National Freedom to Marry Coalition estimates that same-sex marriage recognition is "doable" in the US in ___ years.
A. 5 B. 7 C. 10 D. 12

6. What movie has the "Think Pink" dance number?
A. Pillowtalk B. Carousel C. Funny Face D. Gigi

7. What movie traces a season in the life of an out fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi?
A. Unzipped B. Shampoo C. Burning D. Rage

8. What newsperson is in charge of the upcoming 5 part documentary, "A matter of Choice?"
A. Sawyer B. Couric C. Koppel D. Gumbel

9. What's the name of k.d. lang's new album?
A. Speedway Junkie B. Absolute Tournch
C. k.d. lang: LIVE by Request D. Alive and Kicking

10. An Advocate Review of Kelly McGillis' new film suggested her lesbian love scenes may shock fans due to ____, not seen in the movie 'Witness'.
A. nudity B. a glaring augmentation
C. a long scar D. an extremely thin body

1.B 2.John 3.B 4.A&C 5.A 6.C 7.A 8.C 9.C 10.B

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PA-GALA
Valley Free Press
Allentown Human Relations Commission

Safe-Space of Lehigh University

PFLAG Lehigh Valley

ACCO - A Chorus Celebrating Women

GLORA

Pride of the LV

LV Gay Men's Chorus

NCC GLBT Student Union

The Lehigh Valley Labor Party

EQUAL! at Lucent

Metropolitan Community Church LV

OutThere - Cedar Crest

9th Street Shelter Allentown

LV Community Action Committee

GLEE at Air Products

FACT

AIDS Outreach

The Unitarian Universalist Church LV

GLOSS

LEPOCO

GLISM of Dun & Bradstreet

AIDS Services Center

Theatre Outlet

Integrity - Bethlehem

The Lehigh Valley Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Civic Theater 19th Street Theatre

The Latin Alliance

The Enigma Players

New Covenant Family Ministries

Properties of Merit

Allentown City Democratic Committee

Episcopal Diocese of Bethlehem

To add your organization to this list, call 610-432-5449 or email VFP (liztrish@aol.com).

QUOTE #1

"Our opponents are against us no matter what we seek. When we fight merely not to be beaten up in the streets, they are against us. If we were asking for oxygen, they would be against us. Our opponents will redefine everything we seek as "a slippery slope to gay marriage" and attack us with equal ferocity, no matter what."

Evan Wolfson, former marriage project director for Lambda- explaining that seeking Civil Union legislation rather than same-sex marriage does not lessen opposition.

QUOTE #2

- Chance that a teenaged boy in Botswana will die of AIDS given current infection rates: 9 in 10
From: Harper's Index

QUOTE #3

"We've all heard that a million monkeys banging on a million typewriters will eventually produce a masterpiece. Now, thanks to the Internet, we know this is not true."
--Eylar Coates

QUIZ MASTER = DOOFUS

R.M. pointed out that we were losers last month because the answer to quiz question #5 was way wrong. The correct answer was: Bayard Rustin in 1963. Sorry Bayard!

As If Productions is calling for short films made by YOU! "The Truly Independent Film Festival" is soliciting GLBT theme entries on VHS, less than 10 minutes long. Submissions due Oct 2. Info: <asifproductions@juno.com>.

Distelfink © 9/01 "We won't be missing ya" by Ruby Zebu

In 1993, Jesse Helms called Roberta Achtenberg... not your garden-variety lesbian... She's a militant activist-mean lesbian, working her whole career to advance the homosexual agenda.



So...was that supposed to be a bad thing?

After thirty years of racism and anti-gay bigotry Jesse Helms will be retiring from the Senate.
...WHEW!

The editorial columns and political cartoon that appear in Valley Free Press express the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or attitude of this publication. VFP makes no indication of the sexual orientation of persons, organizations, or businesses mentioned in any issue.

CLOSET



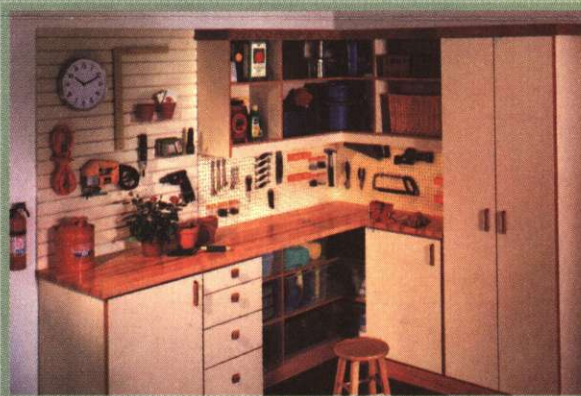
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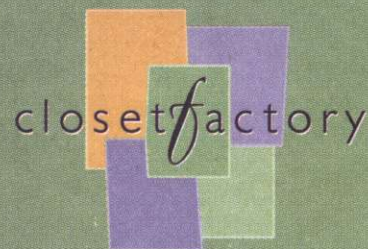
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